Post-Training Activities
Coaching for Excellence in Practice

October 1999
On -The-Job Training Activities for Coaching for Excellence in Practice

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Section I

Introduction
"I would like to suggest that in a day when so much energy seems to be spent on maintenance and manuals, on bureaucracy and meaningless quantification, to be a leader is to enjoy the special privileges of complexity, of ambiguity, of diversity -- but especially the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who permit us to lead."

-Max DePree, Herman Miller, Inc.

Rationale

One of the first elements of effective practice of coaching skills is to understand how one's values and personality influence our interactions with those that we supervise or manage. This awareness and honesty about our traits may help us to recognize that each style may be different but can nonetheless result in coaching and leadership success.

Goal

The Child Welfare Supervisor or Manager will identify their own values and personality and learn how they impact upon others.

Learning Objective

• Describe how personality traits contribute to successful coaching and leadership.

Learning Activity

This activity is designed to further your understanding of how your values and personality traits impact upon your coaching style with staff.
Activity 1: To Scream or Not to Scream

☐ Read the piece: "To Scream or Not to Scream."

☐ Complete the section: "Things To Do Now."

☐ Discuss your observations with your Manager at your next supervisory conference.
To Scream or Not to Scream


Indiana basketball coach Bobby Knight rants and raves -- in practices and at games. And wins. San Francisco Forty-niner Coach Bill Walsh is so cool and collected that he is regularly called "cerebral," "the professor." He wins. Both are respected by their players. Both have an extraordinary degree of compassion for their players, albeit exhibited in almost diametrically opposed ways.

It is important to underscore that observations show that no one personality type is associated with coaching and leadership success. Peters and Austin believe that compassion, empathy and a belief in the ability of the average team member is a must. But this belief can come in wrappers of all descriptions.

Things To Do Now

Visit an agency, organization, or another unit that you particularly admire and observe the supervisor/manager/leader/coach very carefully. What does he or she do that enables the other people to perform? What personality traits influence the person's coaching style? How are these traits used to coach successfully? Plan to spend at least two to three hours observing. Observe how they interact with their teams. When do they work with an individual? How does the style vary from one person to another? Make this is a systematic study. Write down your impressions along with two or three ways you can apply them in your interactions with your team.

Study great leaders. Devote time to it. After all, whether as a supervisor or manager, your career is leadership. Have you studied it as you studied social work? Psychology? Child development? If not, why not?

Compare your personality traits to those of the person(s) you observe. How are they the same? How do they differ? Describe how you use your personality traits to effectively coach staff.
Section II

The Role of the Coach
Section II - The Role of the Coach

"There are an enormous number of managers who have retired on the job."
-Peter Drucker

Rationale

The role of the coach is critical in today's organizations. One of the keys to the effectiveness of supervisors and managers is their ability to lead and coach their staff. Successful coaches must assume a variety of roles to help staff reach their fullest potential. Laying a foundation to include an understanding of the attributes of effective coaching and the importance of it in improving workplace effectiveness will assist in moving into further skill development.

Goal

The Child Welfare Supervisor or Manager will identify effective coaching attributes and behaviors and further their development of the attributes.

Learning Objectives

• Identify the attributes of effective coaching

• Explain the importance of coaching in improving workplace effectiveness

Learning Activities

These activities are designed to assist you in recognizing the attributes of effective coaching and developing or enhancing these attributes to improve the effectiveness of your unit or agency.
Activity 1: Pick a Mentor

- Complete the activity: "Pick a Mentor."
- Discuss your observations with your Manager during your next supervisory conference. Ask your Manager to assist you in identifying activities to develop or enhance your coaching skills.

Activity 2: Quick Reckoning

- Complete the individual and staff activities in "Quick Reckoning."
- Discuss the results of the self and staff assessments with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.
- Develop a plan to implement the action steps at the end of the Activity.
- Discuss your progress regarding skill development or enhancement with your Manager during regular supervisory conferences.

Activity 3: Reflector

- Complete the activity: "Reflector."
- Discuss the results of the observations made of your behavior with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.

Activity 4: Coaching Benefits

- Complete the activity: "Coaching Benefits."
- Discuss the results of the assessment with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.

Activity 5: Action Plan for Coaching

- Complete the activity: "Action Plan for Coaching."
- Discuss your plan for further coaching employees with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.
Activity 6: Video Views: Volume One

- Borrow the video, *Practical Coaching Skills for Managers, Volume One*, by ETC w/CareerTrack from the Regional Training Center.

- Watch the video and record key learning points.

- Discuss the key points of the video with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.
Pick a Mentor

A mentor is a wise, loyal advisor. The word comes from Greek mythology. Odysseus, king of Ithaca, gave us the meaning for "mentor." When he had to leave to fight in the Trojan War, he turned over his son, Telemachus, and his household to Mentor. Serving as teacher and overseer, this trusted guide offered care, advice, friendship and training.

Identify a person in your agency or near-at-hand who you believe is an effective coach. Contact this person and ask whether you can observe and shadow them for a three to four week period.

During your observations, identify experiences that allow you to see meaning in an event or potential within yourself. Identify personal and professional characteristics of the person. Determine behaviors of the person that contribute to their successful coaching.

At the conclusion of the observation period, meet with the person and discuss their views on the things that they believe contribute to their effectiveness when coaching staff.

Using additional activities in this Section, develop a plan to develop or enhance your coaching skills by utilizing the insights gained in your observations.
Quick Reckoning

In the *Personal Preparation for Training* packet, you completed a quick reckoning on the 12 attributes of a good coach. Review your responses and make any adjustments on the grid below.

Rate yourself on each of the following 12 attributes of a good coach. For each characteristic, rate yourself using this scale:

- 5: always
- 4: frequently
- 3: 50/50
- 2: rarely
- 1: never

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusting</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal-oriented</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observant</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As discussed in training, if you gave yourself some 2s and 1s, you have identified areas where you need to do some work. Obviously, 4s and 5s speak well for you as an effective coach. But too many 5s might indicate that you are dreaming.
Use this reality check to determine if your self-assessment is on target: make copies of the additional grid below. Ask the staff that you supervise or manage to rate you anonymously. Then, compare your scores to those given by your staff.

**Quick Reckoning**

**Rating scale:**
- 5: always
- 4: frequently
- 3: 50/50
- 2: rarely
- 1: never

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Follow these steps to develop or enhance the traits of a good coach:

1. tackle one trait at a time and learn how to translate it into action,
2. give yourself a chance to make mistakes and learn from your experience, and
3. give yourself enough time to gain competence.

Reflector

This activity is for the brave only: Ask someone to hold a mirror up so you can see yourself in action.

Begin by identifying someone to serve as your reflector. The person must be observant, articulate, and secure enough to tell you the truth. And you have to be ready to hear that truth -- and to act on it.

Explain to this person that you want her or him to pay attention to your interactions for the next three weeks. Describe the specific behavior you are trying to change and what you hope to accomplish. Then ask for frequent feedback.

Bringing a reflector into the process can provide two important benefits: (1) you get useful information in the form of a description of your coaching behavior from an outside perspective, and (2) you have increased your investment. You are a lot more likely to work on your behavior after you have told someone what you are doing.

Learn from what your reflector tells you to improve your coaching skills.

Coaching Benefits

Use the following form to assess your current work situation. Are the benefits of effective coaching obvious? To what degree? A great deal? Little or no evidence? Add any benefits that are apparent in your unit or agency but are not listed here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Little or No ← A Great Deal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Higher competency levels</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Increased team attitude</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Completion of quality work</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Greater levels of creativity</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Personal accountability for work</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Acceptance of new challenges</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Cooperation, collaboration</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. More and better listening</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. More people development</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Increased productivity</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Positive feedback and reward</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Willingness to delegate</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Greater empowerment</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scoring consistently in the 5-7 range indicates an effective coaching environment. Scoring more often in the 1-3 range signals a need for more practiced coaching skills.

Action Plan for Coaching

Take a few minutes to reinforce some of the concepts and ideas discussed in training by answering the following questions.

- Coaching is a developmental process. To be effective, there must be ongoing one-on-one communication. What are you currently doing to guide your employees?

- Organizational structures are changing rapidly. These changes have necessitated shifts in the way employees are managed. Think about changes in supervisory or managerial roles that you have seen or experienced in your agency. What other changes do you think will occur in those roles by the next decade? How will you handle them?

- Numerous benefits are gained by coaching. What is the best way to communicate these benefits to your staff and gain their support of your coaching efforts?

- It is often easy to find excuses for not coaching staff. Picture your agency during the past four weeks. Have you or has anyone else used any excuses not to coach? What are three specific strategies you can implement to make sure that these excuses are not repeated?

- Opportunities to coach arise daily if you are attuned to them. Think about your current work environment. List at least four situations that will allow you to coach your staff.

- To be sure you have not been neglecting your coaching responsibilities, think about specific employees you feel you should be coaching more. List their names, reasons for coaching them and concrete strategies you plan to use.

  Employee:  
  Reason for Coaching:  
  Strategies:
Checkpoints

_ Maintain regular interpersonal communication with your employees.

_ Be constantly alert to changing situations that could signal a need to coach employees.

_ Do not lose sight of the benefits to be gained from coaching. By using coaching, you set up a potential win-win environment for yourself and for your employees.

_ Avoid the temptation to delay or ignore the need for coaching.

Video Views, Volume One

At the training, *Coaching for Excellence in Practice*, you viewed a few segments of the video series, *Practical Coaching Skills for Managers* by ETC w/CareerTrack. The time did not allow showing the four volumes in their entirety, however the videos contain a lot of valuable information.

Borrow Volume One of the video series from your Regional Training Center and watch it in its entirety. The running time is 43 minutes.

Some of what you will learn in Volume One includes:

✓ The difference between coaching and managing -- and how both skills are best used

✓ The coach's credo: 3 guidelines every coach must follow

✓ How top coaches get people committed to -- and focused on -- organizational goals

✓ Breaking through the barriers that may be blocking your people and organization from improving

✓ Essential coaching questions that help you:
  - Tap the experiences and insights of all your players
  - Draw people in and get them committed
  - Get your people to take ownership of their actions

✓ How to adapt your coaching style to each individual and situation you deal with

✓ When to drop the coaching approach and just take charge

✓ The single hardest challenge you'll face as a coach -- and how to turn it into the most rewarding part of your job
Section III

Steps to Effective Coaching
"If you refuse to accept anything but the best, you may often get it."
-W. Somerset Maugham

Rationale

Most supervisors and managers understand the need to support their staff performing at maximum capacity. Many times, however, supervisors and managers as well as staff, have a difficult time imagining how they can contribute any more than they are already. Gaining the knowledge and skills needed to redesign their approach to developing the full potential of staff in a highly stressed work environment will help supervisors and managers to lessen their feeling of being overwhelmed by competing demands. The establishment of an effective continuous coaching process further helps to assure that all development activities are derived from a clear understanding of the agency's purpose; validates that supervisors, managers and workers need to deliver high quality services; and continues to increase the understanding of a diversity of developmental interventions available to supervisors and managers.

Goal

The Child Welfare Supervisor or Manager will assess, learn and practice skills in effective coaching.

Learning Objectives

• Apply effective coaching processes and skills.

• Develop effective ways to give evaluative and developmental feedback that encourages positive change.

• Demonstrate methods to apply performance standards to the coaching process.
Learning Activities

These activities are designed to further your understanding of the steps to effective coaching and the use of effective communication skills.

Activity 1: Steps to Effective Coaching

☐ Complete the activity: "Steps to Effective Coaching."

☐ Discuss the results of your work with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.

Activity 2: Communication

☐ Read the article: "Communication."

☐ Complete the activity: "Open-Ended Questions."

☐ Discuss your communication skills with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.

Activity 3: How Am I Doing?

☐ Complete the activity: "How Am I Doing?"

☐ Discuss the results with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.

Activity 4: Assertiveness

☐ Read the article: "Managing Reactions to Feedback."

☐ Read the article: "Assertive Talking Skills."

☐ Discuss key learning points from the articles with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.
Activity 5: How Present Am I?

☐ Complete the activity: "How Present Am I?"

☐ Discuss the results with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.

Activity 6: Effective Listeners

☐ Complete the activity: "Effective Listeners."

☐ Discuss the results with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.

Activity 7: Coaching to Build Skills

☐ Read the article: "Coaching to Build Skills."

☐ Complete the activity: "Coaching to Build Skills."

☐ Review your results with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.

Activity 8: Coaching to Clarify and Enhance Confidence

☐ Read the article: "Coaching to Clarify and Enhance Confidence."

☐ Complete the activity: "Coaching to Clarify and Enhance Confidence."

☐ Review the results with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.

Activity 9: Coaching to Build Skills

☐ Read the article: "Coaching to Build Skills."

☐ Complete the activity: "Coaching to Build Skills."

☐ Review the results with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.
Steps to Effective Coaching

In the *Coaching for Excellence in Practice* training, the point was made that if you want to make sure things get done, you need a methodology, a process for making things happen. The following steps to effective coaching were discussed:

Step one in making things happen is to name the challenge and describe the desired outcome. Do not forget to define it accurately.

Step two is to brainstorm possible approaches. Do not forget to encourage people to be open and maybe even a little outrageous. It triggers creativity.

Step three is to develop an action plan. It is like a to-do list.

Step four is set deadlines. They provide a sense of urgency.

Step five is to establish criteria for evaluation. Then you will know if you have succeeded.

Step six is to facilitate action. Figure out what help your employees need to successfully complete their tasks.

Step seven is follow through. Make sure what is supposed to happen by your deadlines does happen.

Identify at least three upcoming opportunities to develop staff to be able to function effectively and independently. Plan for the meetings with staff and use all seven steps to effective coaching each time.

When you have practiced the steps several times and are comfortable with the skill, you can begin to use the process informally when the situation warrants.

Communication

Nearly every survey of an organization's climate, management practices, or culture will have one thing in common. When one member of the organization is asked to identify what needs improvement, the number one area of concern is "communication." Communication is vital to every aspect of our lives and, for better or for worse, it is going on all the time. Our personal lives, our professional relationships, our teams, our careers, all revolve around how effectively we communicate.

Communication is a rather simple process, really. In its most basic form, it consists of a sender, a message, and a receiver. Additionally, filters -- "obstacles," perceptions, vocabulary, biases, physical characteristics -- alter the message as it is sent and as it is received. All of these elements combined comprise what is known as the "feedback loop."

Obviously, a lot can go wrong with this communication process, which is not nearly so simple as it looks or as many people believe. Both the sender's and the receiver's filters affect the message. Their education, training, and cultural backgrounds can cause words and gestures to have vastly different meanings. Physical distance or status in an organization are typical "obstacles" that tend to slow or stop the message. And the feedback loop contains all these features as well!

Both the sender and the receiver must work hard to overcome the problems caused by filters and obstacles. They should...

Senders

- Send clear, understandable messages.
- Use language and terms the receiver understands.
- Be sensitive to clues that reveal how the receiver is "getting" the message.
- Make sure their verbal message and nonverbal signals (such as gestures or facial expressions) support each other.
Receivers

- From time to time, check to be sure they understand the message.
- Show they are paying attention with eye contact, nods, and other listening responses.
- Be courteous in their reactions -- by avoiding interrupting or reacting negatively during the message.

Communication, then, is an ability that requires many skills. For a coach or mentor, the most critical one is listening. Effective coaches and mentors understand how important it is to show they are listening, to check to be sure they have understood, and to demonstrate their acceptance of how others feel.
Open-Ended Questions

Write an open-ended question that will encourage the worker to discuss each of the topics listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Open-Ended Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. You want to know what the worker's career desires are. | ___________________________  
| | ___________________________  
| | ___________________________ |
| 2. You want to know whether the worker liked his/her last boss. | ___________________________  
| | ___________________________  
| | ___________________________ |
| 3. You want to know whether the worker likes his/her present assignment. | ___________________________  
| | ___________________________ |

How Am I Doing?

Effective coaches provide regular performance feedback to the people with whom they work. In the *Personal Preparation for Training* for *Coaching for Excellence in Practice*, the survey, "How Am I Doing?" was completed to provide you with an opportunity to evaluate the quantity and quality of feedback you provide as a coach. Review those results and make any needed changes on the grid below.

Read each statement below and circle the number that you think best describes the feedback you give to your employees.

I think that I...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide positive feedback</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide specific feedback</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide sincere feedback</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give corrective feedback</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticize behavior not the person</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide help to improve</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to find the good in things rather than the bad</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on what's right</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to employees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use graphs, charts, etc. to provide feedback</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer support to employees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass on positive feedback received from others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praise more than criticize</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Score:
Evaluate your responses and answer the following questions:

- What were your highest and lowest scores?
- Why are these the highest and lowest scores?
- What benefit would there be to your employees if you raised your lower scores?
- How do you think your employees would respond to similar questions about your feedback style?

When employees are asked about their supervisor's or manager's feedback, many employees do not have the same perceptions as their supervisors or managers about the quantity and quality of feedback they receive.

The following tool gives you a chance to see if your perceptions match your employees' perceptions. Copy the following page and distribute a copy to each person you supervise or manage at a unit or staff meeting. Explain your reason for doing the survey. Reassure staff that the survey is anonymous so that you can obtain honest feedback.

When you receive the results, do not try to determine who completed the individual surveys. It is important to look for trends in responses. Complete the "Feedback Perception Comparison" to help evaluate the results. Have a follow-up meeting with your employees and discuss what you learned from the employees' survey and what, if anything, you plan to do differently.
Rate Your Boss's Use of Feedback

Read each statement below and circle the number that you think best describes the feedback your boss gives to you.

I think that my boss...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
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<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Listens to employees</td>
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<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses graphs, charts, etc. to provide feedback</td>
<td>1  2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers support to employees</td>
<td>1  2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passes on positive feedback received from others</td>
<td>1  2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praises more than criticizes</td>
<td>1  2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Score:
Feedback Perception Comparison

For each statement below, indicate the score (1, 3, etc.) that you gave yourself for each item. Use the spaces to the right to indicate your employees' scores for the same items. Use additional sheets if necessary.

Then determine the average score of the employee responses (columns E1, E2, etc.) for each item and compare it with your score. Differences of 2.5 or more can indicate areas where improvement may be needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avg.</th>
<th>Mine</th>
<th>E1</th>
<th>E2</th>
<th>E3</th>
<th>E4</th>
<th>E5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides positive feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provides specific feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provides sincere feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gives corrective feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Criticizes behavior not the person</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides help to improve</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tries to find the good in things rather than the bad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Focuses on what's right</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listens to employees</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses graphs, charts, etc. to provide feedback</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from *50 Activities for Coaching/Mentoring* by Donna Berry, Charles Cadwell and Joe Fehrmann.
Managing Reactions to Feedback

IF: -Unmotivated to listen...
THEN: -Reference feedback contract made previously;
-Request feedback from worker regarding your support;
-Give your feedback.

IF: -Not committed to action...
THEN: -Link feedback to the agency goals;
-Link feedback to the personal performance goals of the worker.

IF: -Significant emotional reaction: Shock...
THEN: -Acknowledge it is okay to be shocked (if true);
-Be empathic: reflect the feelings demonstrated;
-(Re)Focus on the performance standard.

IF: -Significant emotional reaction: Tears...
THEN: -Accept that it is okay to cry;
-Give the person time to cry;
-Proceed gradually, (re)focus on the performance standard.

IF: -Significant emotional reaction: Anger...
THEN: -Be empathic: Acknowledge feelings demonstrated;
-Acknowledge that you have been angry about feedback (if true);
-(Re)Focus on performance standard.

IF: -Disagree that there is a problem...
THEN: -Highlight consequences if feedback is ignored.

IF: -Disagree with the Facts...
THEN: -Present evidence that there is a problem.

Assertive Talking Skills

Many times these assertive talking skills will be helpful when managing reactions to feedback. Assertive talking skills might also be needed by the supervisor when the worker attempts to manipulate the supervisor to feel angry, frustrated, or guilty rather than staying focused on problem-solving to improve excellence in practice.

These are the times when you are asked questions or statements are made in such a way that you are left feeling defensive or manipulated. These are "rhetorical" questions/statements. They reflect negative feelings masked as a request for additional information. Oftentimes, they are the result of discomfort associated with change that occurs as learnings are integrated into new ways of behaving. They should be seen as opportunities to further the developmental process rather than resistance to you as a supervisor-coach. These questions come in four types:

* A strong statement including a request for additional information. For example, "I want you to tell me just exactly how you think I can complete a thorough risk assessment under these conditions one more time!" Usually accompanied by raised eyebrows, or scowl.

* A statement reflecting skepticism regarding information you have offered to the person. For example, "How can you say that a safety plan is appropriate in all cases?", said in a loud and strident tone of voice.

* A statement that reflects misunderstanding of something you have said. "I don't believe you just said that there are times that I am justified in leaving children at risk!" Usually said with a loud voice and elevated tone.

* A statement that reflects the person is closed to the opportunities in what you are saying, and focused only on the perceived threats in the statement. For example, "If I follow your advice about updating the case plan regularly it will mean even more paperwork!"

Here are some suggestions on how to respond. First of all, always start by restating, in a tentative way, what you heard to assure you haven't misinterpreted what was said by the person receiving feedback. Then answer as concisely as possible.

Always restate the content of your previous statement, offer additional proof if necessary, and expand on the content if appropriate. If the person is focused on threats, restate opportunities in the situation.

Use these assertive talking skills when appropriate:
· Fogging.

State *calmly* that there may be some truth to what is said. This allows you to hear what is being said, but gives you leeway to agree or disagree with it. Remember, it's not what you say, it's how you say it in all of the following answers. **Calm** is the key word. It is used when you don't agree with the statement or intent of the question from the worker.

· Negative Assertion.

Here you *calmly* (key word again) admit your fault or error. This will totally dissipate any manipulative "gotcha" statements. It also models openness to hearing about, and learning from, mistakes. This is used when you agree that what the person has said is true.

· Negative Inquiry.

In this case, you want to explore the statement or question further because you believe it is holding back problem solving, or you don't understand what the issue is yet. Ask *calmly*: "What about (fill in the blank) bothers you the most? Why does it bother you? What needs to be different to satisfy you?" At some point you will either exhaust the manipulation or discover what the real issues are underlying the manipulative remarks.

· Broken Record.

This type of response is useful when you are confronted by someone who refuses to admit a need for developmental activity and/or you want to redirect the conversation back to the performance improvement plan. You *calmly* restate what you know or want over and over again.

For example, "I understand you feel we need to discuss this issue some more, and it may be that it could use some more time (fogging), however we need to cover a lot of ground today so let's move on to developing the steps you will take to learn the new approach to...fill in the blank (broken record)." This ties fogging with broken record if it is restated each time a person continues to interrupt.

These talking skills are intended to demonstrate *open, honest communication*. Developmental activities are carried out by committed workers. Commitment comes from clarity, not lack of clarity and/or misunderstandings. The overall goal should always be kept in mind: Get excellence in practice while helping increase the self-respect/esteem of the workers who are doing it.

# How Present Am I?

To "be present" is to interact with other people in a way that minimizes the many obstacles to hearing and understanding what people are really saying and needing. This is a critical element of perception.

The following exercise helps you diagnose what gets in the way of your "being present".

Rate yourself against each statement on a scale of 1 to 3:

- **1 = "I rarely or never do this."**
- **2 = "I do this sometimes."**
- **3 = "I do this often."**

**During conversations, I...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Think about what I'll say next, even while others are still speaking</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change the subject, for no reason in particular</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignore or discount what others are saying</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer what I hear to my own experience, rather than taking it at face value</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drift or lose the thread of the conversation</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silently critique or judge what others say, even while they are still speaking</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus only on what others are saying when it interests me</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on special points that cause me to lose sight of the main themes or issues</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look for points of disagreement rather than points of agreement</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add the following ratings:

- **Items 1, 4, and 7:**
- **Items 2, 5, and 8:**
- **Items 3, 6, and 9:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(self-orientation)</th>
<th>(distraction)</th>
<th>(criticism)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Each of these three scores indicates how you deal with a different obstacle to being...
present in interactions with others. Low scores are better than high scores, and any score of "5" or above indicates an opportunity for improvement.

- Self-orientation: A high score on this obstacle may indicate that you focus on your needs at the expense of others during interactions.

- Distraction: A high score on this obstacle may indicate that you are too easily distracted during interactions.

- Criticism: A high score on this obstacle may indicate that you are overly inclined to criticize others rather than maintaining an open, non-judgmental stance.

If you scored high in one or more areas, try to be conscious of your tendency going into conversations with others. Such mindfulness serves a self-correcting function.

**Planning Ahead**

1. Select a conversation or meeting you will be participating in soon.

2. Answer these questions regarding those who will be present, including yourself.

   - How will each person be *feeling* about the conversation or meeting?
   - What will each person be *needing* from the conversation or meeting?
   - What will each person be *expecting* to get out of the conversation?

3. Based on your answers, identify what you will do differently (or not do at all) in the conversation or meeting. You might consider:

   - Whether different people feel differently about the conversation.
   - Whether people's needs outstrip their expectations.
   - Whether people's expectations are consistent with one another.

**Daily Practices**

- Practice compassion in response to other's poor behavior by resisting the instinct to respond in kind. Instead, try to understand the needs and feelings that generated the poor behavior and do what you can to address them.

To take a common example, if you believe someone has just lashed out at you, resist the urge to take it entirely personally and respond unkindly. Instead, consider what part of work conditions, environment, or situation may be contributing to this person's stress level and respond with empathy and an eye toward reducing that stress.
• Before conversations or meetings, or when someone approaches you spontaneously, "assess" each person who will be present by asking:

- How is each person feeling right now?
- What does each person need from this conversation or meeting?
- What does each person expect from this conversation or meeting?

Based on your answers, plan or adjust your participation accordingly.

• Practice observing others' body language and other nonverbal signals. To do this, ask yourself:

- What kinds of body language is this person (or people) displaying?
- What might this language mean?
- How consistent is the body language with what is being said?

Entire books are devoted to nonverbal communication, but the two examples below are useful starting points for those desiring to improve their abilities to "read" others.

Type of language:

Eye position or movement

Specific example:

Refusal to make eye contact

What it may mean:

They may be somehow uncomfortable (e.g., angry or embarrassed), but trying to avoid confronting whatever the issue is.

What you might do:

Make clear that you are open to discussing any difficult issues.

Type of language:

Hand position or movement
Specific example:

Crossed hands, or hands held in front of the body

What it may mean:

They may be feeling threatened, and/or trying to maintain emotional distance.

What you might do:

Try to stop or adjust behavior that might be causing them to perceive a threat.

Activities, Assignments, and Projects

• Volunteer in the community as a big brother or sister, or in your organization as a mentor or coach.

• Participate on a team chartered with improving the quality of life in your work place, or with addressing issues of "work-life balance."

• Volunteer for community work that requires considerable interaction with diverse groups of people.

• See opportunities to provide coaching and mentoring in your organization. Maintain a coach's journal in which you record and update profiles of each person you coach with the purpose of deepening your understanding of their governing values, motivations, and needs.

Readings and Other Self-Study Resources

• Cooper, Robert K., and Sawaf Ayman, Executive EQ: Emotional Intelligence in Leadership and Organizations. Grosset/Putnam, 1996. Science is proving that it is the Emotional Quotient, EQ, more than IQ or raw brain power alone that underpins many of the best decisions, the most dynamic businesses, and the most satisfying and successful lives. Cooper's argument is based on an innovative synthesis of current research and the experience of leaders worldwide.

a holistic, integrated, principle-centered approach for solving personal and professional problems. With insights and anecdotes, the author reveals a step-by-step guide for living with fairness, integrity, honesty, and human dignity -- principles that provide the security needed to adapt to change, and the wisdom and power to take advantage of the opportunities that change creates.

- Goleman, Daniel, *Emotional Intelligence*. Bantam Books, 1995. Is IQ destiny? Not nearly as much as we think. The author argues that our view of human intelligence is far too narrow, ignoring a crucial range of abilities that matter immensely in terms of how we do in life. His argument is based on an original synthesis of current research, including new insights into the brain architecture underlying emotion and rationality. He shows precisely how emotional intelligence can be nurtured and strengthened in all of us.

- Keirsey, David, and Marilyn Bates, *Please Understand Me: Character and Temperament Types*. Prometheus Nemesis, 1984. This book defines personality differences into 16 portraits. These portraits are useful, not only in understanding others and yourself, but also in helping to predict how people may communicate and interact with one another.

Effective Listeners

People make mistakes. As coaches, our job is to help them make fewer mistakes so that their performance improves.

Unfortunately, we sometimes make things worse instead of better because we make errors when we coach. Often these errors seem minor and are unintentional. Still, they can cause problems in our relationships with our employees.

Review the following characteristics and compare and contrast the paired descriptions. During your review, think of specific examples of coaches who have listening skills like those described. Were these coaches effective or ineffective?

### Characteristics of Ineffective/Effective Listeners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ineffective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Verbal Behavior</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looks bored; uninterested or judgmental; avoids eye contact.</td>
<td>Maintains positive posture and avoids distracting behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus of Attention</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifts focus to self and talks about own accomplishments.</td>
<td>Keeps focus of comments on the other person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acceptance</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn't accept other person's ideas or feelings. Makes suggestions first.</td>
<td>Accepts ideas and feelings and probes for more information before making recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empathy</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fails to see or hear the other person's point of view.</td>
<td>Tries to put him-/herself in the other person's shoes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Probing</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fails to probe or follow up for additional information.</td>
<td>Probes in a helpful way, but does not play &quot;20 Questions.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paraphrasing</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fails to check whether or not message was received accurately.</td>
<td>Paraphrases and restates what he/she thought the other person said.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Advice
Narrows the choices by suggesting the best solution early in the discussion. Asks for suggestions from the other person as well as providing own alternatives.

Coaching Miscues

Read the situations below. The coach makes one or more miscues. Identify the miscues and then make your own suggestions for improvement.

Situation 1

Employee: "She gets on my nerves."
Coach: "Why don't you sit down and discuss it with her. I'm sure you two can solve this like adults so we can get some work done around here."

Coaching miscue:

Suggested improvement:

Situation 2

Employee: "Yeah, I know mistakes are costly."
Coach: "Do you proofread the articles before you send the newsletter to the printer?"
Employee: "Every time."

Coach: "Are you sure you understand your new computer?"

Coaching miscue:

Suggested improvement:

Situation 3

Employee: "Things are really hectic this time of year. We can't get caught up because someone always wants something different this week than last week or last year."
Coach: "This is a holiday that comes every year at this time. You need to improve your planning and use the system I showed you."
Coaching miscue:

Suggested improvement:

**Situation 4**

*Employee:* "Good morning."
*Coach:* "This is the third time you've been late this month!"
*Employee:* "I didn't know we had to punch a management time clock."
*Coach:* "Don't you realize how much it disrupts my meetings to have you always coming in late?"

Coaching miscue:

Suggested improvement:

**Situation 5**

*Coach:* "Didn't we have this discussion once before?"
*Employee:* "Yes, but that was different."
*Coach:* "Well, I'm surprised you didn't remember. I don't like having to stop what I'm doing to take care of something you should have handled."

Coaching miscue:

Suggested improvement:

Now, check your responses with the answer key on the following page.
Situation 1

• Employee seems to be blaming someone else. The manager accepts it without question and offers an "ideal" solution.

• A better approach would be for the coach to gather more information and involve the employee in offering a solution.

Situation 2

• The coach is trying to guess the problems and is implying that the employee is careless.

• A more effective coach would try to find out more about the situation by asking the employee to analyze the conditions causing the errors.

Situation 3

• The error is in implying lack of judgement rather than describing the behavior. The employee is likely to be defensive.

• A better response would be to use active listening and be sure you understand the employee's point of view.

Situation 4

• The coach has been allowing the behavior to go on too long without taking action.

• The coach should try to find out why the employee is late and determine if the problem can be solved.

Situation 5

• The coach has not been practicing good follow up. Also he/she seems to be impatient and making value judgements.

• The coach would be better advised to find out why the employee feels this case is different. Asking a few questions would get the dialogue started.
In view of this exercise, consider the following questions:

- How effective do you think these coaches would be on the job?
- What did you learn from the exercise?
- How will this help you on the job?
- What benefits do you see in using these coaching techniques?
- What obstacles, if any, will keep you from using what you've learned?

Summary points from this activity include:

- avoid judgement
- maintain objectivity
- be sincere
- strive to help
- get employee commitment
- listening is critical

Coaching to Build Skills

The supervisor will often need to coach the worker as part of their ongoing supervisory conferences when a skill deficit exists. If the supervisor is not capable of explaining and demonstrating the skill, formal training or use of a skilled worker to complete the first two steps in the coaching process may be needed. The four steps in the coaching for skills process are:

- **Explain** -- in a clear and logical order how the skill is carried out. Here is where the supervisor will have to attain the fifth level of competence: conscious, unconscious, competence. That is, explain what she or he does without thinking so that the worker can understand the skill application.

- **Demonstrate** -- the skill so that the worker can observe the behavior. If the worker appears to be confused at either the first or second step, check your perception by asking "observation questions" such as "You appear confused about what I've said (or demonstrated), am I right?" or "Tell me what seems to be confusing you about what I said (or demonstrated) just now?" Explaining and demonstrating can be combined wherever necessary.

- **Practice** -- of the skill by the worker to move along the developmental continuum from conscious incompetence to unconscious competence. There is a need for immediate and repeated opportunities to practice newly learned skills.

- **Feedback** -- should be given by the supervisor to highlight progress in acquiring skill components as well as demonstrations and suggestions for how to improve in weak areas.

This needs to be balanced feedback, identifying where the person is doing well (positive evaluative feedback); and clearly identifying where the person can improve their performance (negative evaluative feedback). If required, practice can lead back to feedback whenever necessary. The practice -- feedback loop can be repeated as often as needed to reach unconscious competence (habit).

Source: *Supervising for Optimal Risk Assessment and Case Planning* by Burt J. Annin and Mark Z. Hartford. Ohio: The Ohio Department of Human Services
Practice

Identify an employee who does not have the competence to meet a purpose-critical standard of practice. Name the standard of practice and determine the steps you will take to enhance the employee's performance.
Coaching to Clarify and Enhance Confidence

If the skills needed to carry out the standard are demonstrated by the worker, but the worker is hesitant to demonstrate them in her or his practice, other coaching strategies may be needed. The supervisor will need to coach the worker when the person does not have confidence in her or his ability to master the necessary skills and abilities needed to meet the performance standard.

The first step is to identify that a lack of confidence exists. The supervisor will know because the person will tell her or him verbally: "I'm not sure that I'll ever be able to do this well..."; or will exhibit non-verbal cues that indicate a lack of confidence: hesitation in voice and action, avoidance of eye contact and/or responding to requests to demonstrate the needed skills.

Many times workers will hide their true feelings for fear of the consequences. A supervisor should ask "observation questions" to be sure that this is a barrier to desired performance. The skill requires asking the questions tentatively to allow the worker to agree or modify how they are feeling. For example: "I have a feeling you are not totally confident in your ability to do this well, am I right?"

Once a lack of confidence is identified and it is agreed that this is a problem, the second step is to enhance the person's confidence using the following techniques:

- **Reassure** that these feelings are normal in these types of situations. If the supervisor has a personal experience that is similar to what the worker is experiencing, the supervisor should share it.

- If possible, **challenge** the worker's perception if the supervisor can remind the worker of a similar experience where the worker learned the needed skills and achieved excellence in practice. Sometimes the worker feels that there will be significant negative consequences if they fail to execute the standard successfully. At these times the supervisor should ask the worker "What is the worst thing that could happen to them if they fail." Reassure them, where possible, that you will be there to help them if they get into trouble.

- **Offer** concrete ways that you can help them begin implementing the standard. Be sure to commit to only those things you are able and willing to do to support the person. If you are unavailable just once after you committed to be available, the worker won't trust you to follow through on your commitments in the future.

Source: *Supervising for Optimal Risk Assessment and Case Planning* by Burt J. Annin and Mark Z. Hartford.
Ohio: The Ohio Department of Human Services
Practice

Identify an employee who is not confident that he or she can meet a purpose-critical standard of practice. Identify the practice standard and determine the steps you will take to enhance the worker's performance.
Coaching to Enhance Motivation

Ultimately, each person needs to motivate themself. The supervisor does have a responsibility to enhance the likelihood that a person will be a self-starter and self-motivated worker. It has to always be remembered that different things motivate different people. The key to coaching is helping someone (re)discover their motives and find the connections to the performance standards.

You can tell when a person is motivated to perform when they clearly demonstrate that they care about performing successfully, take initiative to solve their own performance problems, demonstrate willingness to collaborate in finding improved ways of carrying out the required standards, and provide mutual support to others with similar performance problems as they search for solutions.

Not everyone demonstrates that they are motivated. Public agency work is not easy. As a result, workers often demonstrate a lack of motivation by having a low tolerance for consumer fallibility, poor relationships with consumers, other staff and the supervisor, and fail to follow through on assignments and tasks they have done successfully in the past.

The supervisor needs to support the worker to take responsibility for their own motivation. The worst way to support a worker who is not motivated is to give advice on how to get the work done. The worker will tend to react to advice with reasons why it can't be done, sometimes referred to as the "Yes, but game." The supervisor offers advice, the worker says "Yes, but...(fill in the answer)." Rather, the supervisor should ask "what", "when" and "how" questions, pushing the worker to give increasingly greater detail in her or his answers. Here are examples of what, how and when questions:

· How is what you are doing now hurting (or helping) you...?
· What can you do about...(identified barriers)?
· How can you make it...(better)?
· What can you change...(in your approach)?
· How are you going to get it done...?
· What do you need to do...(differently)?
· When can you do...?
· When will you get it done...?
Never ask "why" questions. They simply give the worker an opportunity to give you an excuse for not meeting the required performance standard. Sometimes, assertive talking skills might be needed by the supervisor when the worker attempts to manipulate the supervisor to feel angry, frustrated, or guilty rather than staying focused on problem-solving to improve excellence in practice.

Beyond these skill and emotional/motivational barriers to excellence in practice, there are additional environmental factors that should be considered. Other people and forces in the environment besides the supervisor and worker may drive or restrain the full implementation of performance standards. These forces need to be identified, assessed and a plan developed to minimize the impact of the most powerful restraining forces.

Source: *Supervising for Optimal Risk Assessment and Case Planning* by Burt J. Annin and Mark Z. Hartford.
Ohio: The Ohio Department of Human Services

**Practice**

Identify an employee who is not committed to a purpose-critical standard of practice. Identify the practice standard and determine the steps you will take to enhance the worker's performance.
Section IV

Coaching Strategies
"If the only tool you have is a hammer, you treat everything like a nail."

**Rationale**

Many supervisors and managers have routine mechanisms in place for communication within the agency. In some agencies, these mechanisms are missing. Effective use of individual supervisory conferences and staff meetings provides opportunities to practice good coaching skills. Supervisory conferences offer a time to provide oversight of the casework monitoring and evaluation processes. Staff meetings are a mechanism to help ensure that staff at all levels are aware of, and operate in accordance with, the mission, standards, policies and goals of the agency. In addition, this section will discuss other coaching strategies and principles to aid supervisors and managers in their day-to-day efforts.

**Goal**

The Child Welfare Supervisor or Manager will enhance their coaching strategies in the areas of individual supervisory conferences, staff meetings, and in supervising or managing employees with disabilities.

**Learning Objectives**

- Demonstrate effectiveness in planning and conducting individual supervisory conferences and unit or staff meetings.

- Employ strategies for providing an inclusive environment for employees with disabilities.

**Learning Activities**

These activities are designed to enhance your skills in planning and conducting meetings and in providing an inclusive agency environment.
Activity 1: How Often?

- Complete the activity: "How Often?"
- Review the results of your planning with your Manager at your next supervisory conference.

Activity 2: Meeting Design and Facilitation

- Complete the section: "Meeting Design and Facilitation."
- Discuss the key points with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.

Activity 3: Establishing a Nonthreatening Workplace

- Complete the section: "Establishing a Nonthreatening Workplace."
- Discuss the current status of your work environment and your ideas on how to make it more inclusive with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.

Activity 4: More Video Views

- Borrow the video, *Practical Coaching Skills for Managers*, Volume Four, from your Regional Training Center and view it in its entirety.
- Review the key learning points from the video with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.
How Often?

In the *Coaching for Excellence in Practice* training, you began to look at the frequency with which you hold individual supervisory conferences with each of the persons who you supervise or manage. Another grid is provided on the following page for you to determine the frequency for all of your employees.

Plot each employee on each of the four continuum lines:

- difficulty of the specific standards assigned
- how structured or unstructured is the work environment
- how repetitious or how different each time is the policy application
- the level of employee competence, confidence and commitment.

You can use one grid for all employees or copy the grid and complete a separate one for each person.

When the four factors have been plotted for each employee, determine on the top continuum whether you should meet more or less often with each employee. Determine any changes that may be needed in the frequency of your individual supervisory conferences.
### Supervisory Conferences: How Often?

**Benchmark:** Once per week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisory Conferences: How Often?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark: Once per week</td>
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</table>

| More | Less Often |
|-------------------------------------|
| Supervising for Optimal Risk Assessment and Case Planning by Burt J. Annin and Mark Z. Hartford, |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Much</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternatives?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Many</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Competence, Confidence and Commitment?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from *Supervising for Optimal Risk Assessment and Case Planning* by Burt J. Annin and Mark Z. Hartford,
Meeting Design and Facilitation

Research reveals that managers and technical professionals spend one-fourth of their total work week in meetings. Studies also show that meeting participants consider more than half of those hours wasted or unproductive time. One of the chief reasons for this perception is the inefficiency and disorganization so frequently characteristic of organizational meetings.

Use the brief assessment that follows to obtain a picture of yourself as a meeting conductor. To what extent do you apply a process orientation to your meeting design and facilitation? Circle "yes" or "no" to each of the following questions based upon how you act (or would act) as a meeting leader. Remember that honest answers will best serve your learning development.

| Yes | No | 1. Do I have clear objectives for the meeting? |
| Yes | No | 2. Am I selective about the invited participants? |
| Yes | No | 3. Do I prepare an agenda and distribute it in advance of the meeting? |
| Yes | No | 4. Do I arrive early enough to check the arrangements? |
| Yes | No | 5. Do I start the meeting promptly regardless of who is present? |
| Yes | No | 6. Do I follow the agenda? |
| Yes | No | 7. Do I manage time and conclude the meeting as scheduled? |
| Yes | No | 8. Do I elicit everyone's participation? |
| Yes | No | 9. Do I help the resolution of conflict? |
| Yes | No | 10. Do I maintain proper control of the discussion? |
| Yes | No | 11. Do I summarize accomplishments at the end of the meeting and clarify any action to be taken? |
| Yes | No | 12. Do I prepare and distribute a memorandum of the discussion? |
Yes    No    13. Do I request evaluative feedback from participants?
Yes    No    14. Do I take agreed upon action?
Yes    No    15. Do I follow up on action to be taken by others?

Scan the results to determine the extent to which you adhere to a meeting process. Consider what specific practices and behaviors you might wish to adopt in order to achieve more efficient and effective meetings.

**Daily Practice**

In general, when things go wrong we tend to seek out individuals or groups to blame for the problem. In fact, more often than not, problems are due less to individual failure than to the systems and processes the individuals work within.

When things go wrong, therefore, try shifting your response from "Who's to blame?" to "What was the process for doing X, and how might we fix it so it doesn't break down again?"

If you examine the process and find nothing amiss, there's always time at that point to hold a specific person or group accountable for the problem.

*Adapted from* Leadership Development. Lexington: Linkage Incorporated.
Establishing a Non-threatening Workplace

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) opens employment opportunities traditionally closed to people with disabilities. It is expected that larger percentages of the workforce will have disabilities in the future. If your organization does not have a formal ADA awareness program, it should. This would facilitate open communication and harmonious interactions among all workers.

A key strategy to implement immediately is to educate your staff about the ADA and what it means. Raise their awareness of the capabilities of people with disabilities and work toward developing an atmosphere that fosters inclusiveness. You can start by examining your own vocabulary related to people with disabilities. When referring to employees with disabilities, always refer to the person first, then the disability. Example: *John uses a wheelchair.*

**Instead of-----------------------------Use**

"John is a victim of..."  "John has..."
"Sue is afflicted with..."  "Sue has..."
"Jim is confined to a wheelchair."  "Jim has a mobility impairment." or "Jim uses a wheelchair."

"Handicapped"

"Disabled" or "Physically or mentally challenged"

"Suffering from..."  "...has..."
"Deaf and dumb"

"Has a hearing and speaking disability"

"Joan is an epileptic."

"Joan has epilepsy."

Think about other terminology you and your co-workers currently use that could be considered offensive. Write it down here and make a concerted effort to end its use.
Strategies for Success

To help in developing an inclusive workplace, consider these tips.

- Read and research the ADA. Read up on various types of disabilities. Hundreds of books and articles are on the market that address the ADA and people with disabilities. Read as many as possible and pass the information on to your employees.

- Have experts from local disability advocacy groups come in to speak with your employees about disabilities.

- Work with your human resources department to make reasonable accommodations for new or current employees.

- Ensure that applicants and employees with disabilities have equal access to all workplace opportunities available to nondisabled employees.

- Provide sensitivity training on dealing with people who have disabilities, just as you address other diversity issues through training.

- Work with all employees to dispel myths about people with disabilities.

Myths About People With Disabilities

Myths normally result from fears, negative stereotypes, or ignorance. Generally, these are the products of early experiences related to disabilities. Children are often told "not to stare," "just ignore them," or "don't ask," when a person with a disability is encountered. It is no wonder that the following myths exist:

- **Using a wheelchair is confining.** Not true. In fact, most users of wheelchairs think of them the same way a car is viewed, as devices that aid mobility.

- **Supervising people with disabilities is hard work.** True, but it is no harder than supervising nondisabled workers. If you have a system in place for coaching employees, it should be no harder to supervise employees with disabilities than to supervise nondisabled employees. Employees with disabilities do face challenges, but so do all employees.

- **People with disabilities live with tragedy and frustration.** Not true. Persons with disabilities live fulfilling lives with laughing, crying, ups, and downs -- like everyone else.
■ Employees with disabilities will cause workers' compensation rates to rise. They are accident prone. Not true. According to a 1990 joint DuPont/U.S. Department of Labor study, 97 percent of employees with disabilities ranked average or above on safety issues.

■ Absenteeism and turnover are higher for employees with disabilities. Not true. In studies conducted by the U.S. Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, 95 percent of employees with disabilities ranked as well as, or better than, nondisabled employees in absenteeism, and 99 percent ranked as well as or better in turnover.

Expanding What You Have Learned

1. The intent of the ADA is to promote equal opportunities for employees with disabilities and to destroy stereotypical job assignments. What types of jobs are employees with disabilities performing in your organization? Do they have equal access to job opportunities?

2. What are some things you can do to help eliminate concerns and apprehensions about working with employees with disabilities?

3. You have read several suggestions for including employees with disabilities. What other actions can you take to ensure inclusiveness in work and social settings?

More Video Views

At the training, *Coaching for Excellence in Practice*, you viewed a few segments of the video series, *Practical Coaching Skills for Managers* by ETC w/CareerTrack. The time did not allow showing the four volumes in their entirety, however the videos contain a lot of valuable information.

Borrow Volume Four of the video series from your Regional Training Center and watch it in its entirety. The running time is 49 minutes.

Some of what you will learn in Volume Four includes:

- **Dealing with the different "types" of employees you're likely to coach:**
  - The unmotivated
  - The risk-taker
  - The prima donna
  - The as-far-as-you-can-go
  - The know-it-all
  - The "BALTY"
  - The superstar

- **The key differences between coaching a team and coaching an individual**

- **Motivating your team to be highly invested in reaching its performance goals**

- **Why and how to allow your team members to assign task responsibilities to themselves**

- **Capitalizing on conflicts: how to turn team turbulence into a catalyst for positive change**

- **How to create the kind of camaraderie that gets your employees to hold each other accountable**

- **Specific ways to celebrate your team's achievements**
Section V

Planning
Section V - Planning

"One must learn by doing the thing; for though you think you know it, you have no certainty until you try."

-Sophocles

**Rationale**

Knowing and understanding the principles of effective coaching is critical for supervisors and managers. However, if this knowledge and understanding is not used on a daily basis in the workplace, it will be of no benefit to the agency, the staff or to children and families. The development of a plan and schedule to apply all the information discussed in training will help ensure that workers will be supported in achieving excellence in practice.

**Goal**

The Child Welfare Supervisor or Manager will implement information and resources from the *Coaching for Excellence in Practice* training.

**Learning Objective**

- Apply the theories, models and information discussed, and the resources obtained in training to supporting staff in achieving optimal performance in the areas of risk assessment and case planning.

**Learning Activities**

These activities are designed to assist in the transfer of learning from formal training to the work environment.
Activity 1: Skill Maintenance

☐ Complete the activity: "Skill Maintenance."

☐ Discuss the results with your Manager at your next supervisory conference and at three-month intervals.

Activity 2: The Field Guide


☐ Develop a plan to integrate the use of the *Field Guide to Child Welfare* in your daily supervision or management.

☐ Discuss the implementation of the use of the *Field Guide to Child Welfare* with your Manager during your next supervisory conference.

Activity 3: The Standards

☐ Review the *Pennsylvania Child Welfare Practice Standards.*

☐ Meet with your Manager to discuss plans on how the *Standards* will be implemented into your agency's ongoing processes.
Skill Maintenance

Psychologists have found that, on average, it takes 21 to 30 days to change a behavior. To make the information and skills you have learned in training a part of your routine, use the following chart as a checklist.

Write today's date in the space provided and make a notation on your daily calendar. At the indicated intervals, check to see that you are meeting the objectives. If you find that you are not or have forgotten their importance, go back and review the training material to reinforce your learning. Repeat the cycle every three months after your last entry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Today's Date: __________________________</th>
<th>Date: ___</th>
<th>Date: ___</th>
<th>Date: ___</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I periodically examine my role as coach to ensure that I am meeting employee needs and expectations.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I consciously avoid common excuses for not coaching my employees.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have and use a standard procedure for orienting all new employees.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. For better efficiency, I use peer coaches to help train other employees.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I understand and follow each phase of the coaching process model.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I recognize the need for solid interpersonal skills.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I am conscientious and consistent in giving performance feedback to others.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I recognize and deal effectively with my over- and underachievers.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I keep employees informed about diversity-related issues.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I maintain a standardized file on each of my employees.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>